



Embassy of the United States in Mexico

Fact Sheet

Drug Demand Reduction

The Merida Initiative's Drug Demand Reduction effort is aimed at strengthening Mexico's drug addiction diagnosis, treatment, and data-gathering infrastructure, in order to facilitate long-term reduction in illegal drug consumption. This effort is currently comprised of the following programs:

1. **Drug Treatment Courts (DTCs):** INL Mexico has provided technical assistance since 2009 for the creation and expansion of DTCs in Mexico. INL recently contributed \$2.5 million to the OAS for a program implementing new DTCs in additional Mexican states. The city of Cuernavaca has opened the first DTC outside of Nuevo León, and Durango and the State of Mexico are expected to establish DTCs in 2014. INL has also funded training and the development of procedural handbooks, needs assessments, and court management tools. It also has financed a diagnostic study by the OAS of Mexico's first drug treatment court, in Nuevo León, which will provide an evaluation framework that will be useful in other states.
2. **Anti-Drug Community Coalitions:** INL Mexico funded an initiative with civil society aimed at building anti-drug community coalitions in cities near the U.S.-Mexico border (*i.e.*, Chihuahua, Baja California, and Sonora). INL grantee *Programa Compañeros*, an NGO based in Ciudad Juárez, is coordinating the consolidation of existing coalitions and leading the expansion of coalitions to Tamaulipas, Durango, Nuevo Leon and the State of Mexico. As part of this grant, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America provides training and technical assistance. The program educates and empowers members of the community to formulate, implement, and evaluate an action plan to eliminate inducements to drug use through the pooling of common resources.
3. **Drug Use Reduction Interventions:** INL Mexico has funded research projects that test the effectiveness of specific therapeutic interventions to determine their effectiveness. Mexican health authorities can recommend the adoption of such interventions to institutions active in anti-addiction treatment. Among the projects funded by INL was development of a network of research "nodes" to conduct clinical addiction research meeting the standards of the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). This program, implemented by the University of Miami and the Mexican Institute of Psychiatry, will end in 2014. In addition, INL recently issued two Requests for Applications to test the effectiveness of interventions in preventing addiction-inducing behavior in school-age children and improving outcomes for anti-addiction and anti-violence treatments.
4. **Drug Counselor Certification:** In partnership with the OAS Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), this program seeks to institutionalize the education of addiction treatment staff, through development of a certification program and educational curriculum to train approximately 3,000 drug treatment counselors across Mexico. The project team has already conducted a national survey of inpatient facilities and available treatment services, and has created teaching and evaluation instruments for counselors. About 600 counselors have already been fully trained, with certification of those meeting the new standards expected to start in 2014.
5. **National IT Network against Addictions (Red Nacional Contra Las Adicciones, or RENADIC):** The RENADIC project created an \$18 million IT platform to link 400 addiction resource centers across Mexico. This network enables accurate case management, standardizes diagnostics and data collection, and encourages best practices.

6. **Other Efforts:** Additionally, The Merida Initiative also has financed the development of a model drug rehabilitation and prevention center in Ciudad Juárez, where Mexico's largest and oldest NGO focused on addictions, *Centros de Integración Juvenil, A.C.*, provides job training, addiction diagnosis/prevention, and artistic/sports activities. INL Mexico also funds a drug demand reduction program in the Mexican prison system. Finally, UCLA and the Mexican National Institute of Psychiatry are conducting a bi-national drug prevalence study, which will identify consumption trends in the Baja California/Southern California area.